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Spain: A First Look at the Gonzalez Team

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An Intelligence Assessment

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An Intelligence Assessment

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This assessment was prepared by [redacted]
[redacted] of the Office of European Analysis with a
contribution from the Office of Central Reference.
Comments and queries are welcome and may be
addressed to the Chief, Iberia-Aegean Branch,
EUR[A], [redacted]

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Key Judgments

*Information available
as of 8 December 1982
was used in this report.*

Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez has selected young, competent, and administratively experienced moderates for his Cabinet. While we would classify the majority of the ministers as social democrats, we are struck by the extent to which Gonzalez has incorporated representatives from all sectors of the Socialist Party into his government—with the notable exception of the radical Marxist “critico” faction. Nine of the 16 ministers are professional economists; many were educated in Europe or North America and have had practical experience in government that supplements their academic credentials. In our view Gonzalez has selected his ministers more for their technical competence and their compatibility with his views than for their personal loyalty or closeness to the Prime Minister. While some cabinet members—especially Vice Prime Minister Alfonso Guerra, Economics Minister Miguel Boyer, and Culture Minister Javier Solana—are long-time Gonzalez intimates, others—including the holders of the important defense, foreign affairs, and territorial administration portfolios—do not belong to the Prime Minister’s inner circle.

Although the moderate cast of the government and Gonzalez’s effective leadership style and undisputed authority within the party will provide Cabinet cohesion, we think the potential exists for friction among the ministers. If the government’s moderate economic package and cautious policies prove ineffective, personal rivalries could blossom among members of the economic team, and between the abrasive Alfonso Guerra and much of the Cabinet. We believe another source of tension may be the responsibilities of Foreign Minister Fernando Moran, who is somewhat more leftist and doctrinaire than the rest of the Cabinet. In our view Gonzalez will attempt to restrict Moran’s autonomy and keep relations with the United States, Europe, and Latin America under his personal control.

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Not since the brief heyday of Adolfo Suarez has a Spanish Prime Minister matched the confidence, sense of authority, and undisputed preeminence within his party possessed by Felipe Gonzalez. The new Prime Minister's image as a youthful, idealistic but pragmatic reformer—widely and effectively promoted during the electoral campaign—far overshadows the prestige of his party. In fact, the current Socialist Workers Party (PSOE), notwithstanding its century-long existence, is very much the product of Gonzalez and his immediate collaborators. When Gonzalez became PSOE Secretary General in 1974, the party was a small, radical, and largely ineffectual underground organization in opposition to Franco; now it is a large, well disciplined, and moderate party on its way to embracing modern European social democracy.

We believe that Gonzalez will take charge of his government much as he has dominated the PSOE. Although his leadership style is collegial and generally nonabrasive, Gonzalez will use his unrivaled authority to impose discipline within his administration and clearly set the government's priorities and goals. The orderly and controlled fashion in which the cabinet was assembled—with virtually no leaks to the press and few rumors of factional infighting—bodes well for the government's initial stability and cohesion.

The Cabinet reflects Gonzalez's pragmatism, moderation, and caution—qualities he displayed in abundance during the electoral campaign. Nine of the 16 ministers are professional economists, many of them with extensive administrative experience. The emphasis on technical competence is combined with youth: the average age of the ministers is Gonzalez's own 40 years. While a majority of the Cabinet members can be ideologically defined as social democrats, representatives of all the PSOE's tendencies—with the exception of the radical Marxist "critico" faction—are present in the new government. Several ministers—including Foreign Minister Fernando Moran and Economics Minister Miguel Boyer—held official

Felipe Gonzalez Marquez

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Spain's most popular politician, 40-year-old Prime Minister Gonzalez is the undisputed leader of Spanish socialism. Politically pragmatic and nonideological, he has avoided identification with any faction within the party and is largely responsible for the moderate image that brought the PSOE to power. Gonzalez practiced labor law in Seville before joining the PSOE in 1964. He has been secretary general of the party since 1974 and a deputy to the Cortes since 1977.

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or advisory posts during the Franco regime. At least four of the appointees—among them Transport and Communications Minister Enrique Baron, Territorial Administration Minister Tomas de la Cuadra, and Interior Minister Jose Barrionuevo—do not have even a whiff of Marxism in their past, having joined the socialists only when the Christian Democratic opposition groups they supported shifted markedly to the right. Gonzalez seems to have chosen his ministers

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mainly for their professional abilities and political compatibility, not for their personal loyalty or closeness to him. Although a number of key figures—notably Vice Prime Minister Alfonso Guerra, Minister of Culture Javier Solana, and Miguel Boyer—are long-time intimates of Gonzalez, the holders of the important foreign affairs, defense, territorial administration, and justice posts, for example, do not belong to the Prime Minister's inner circle.

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Alfonso Guerra Gonzalez

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Vice Prime Minister Alfonso Guerra, whose association with Felipe Gonzalez dates back to the 1950s, has been Vice Secretary General of the PSOE since 1979. He is widely recognized as a talented administrator who has orchestrated the PSOE's successful campaigns and created the organization behind Gonzalez's rise to power. Nevertheless, Guerra's confrontational style and leftist rhetoric have alienated many party moderates. Guerra, 42, was his party's anti-NATO standard bearer before Spain joined that organization. Guerra holds a degree in philosophy and is an industrial engineer by profession.

the Prime Minister and his key role in moderating the PSOE during the past half decade raise doubts as to the depth of his radicalism. In our view much of the PSOE's cohesion has been due to a division of labor between its two top leaders, Gonzalez supplying the carrot of statesmanship and moderation and Guerra wielding the stick of internal discipline combined with occasional verbal sops to the left. We believe that Guerra will serve Gonzalez's interests better as a key man inside the government than outside the Cabinet, as full-time head of the PSOE parliamentary delegation. Guerra is a hard-hitting debater, and as Socialist floor leader he might frequently clash with the equally volatile leader of the opposition, Manuel Fraga.

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The Gonzalez-Guerra Duo

Virtually the sole source of drama during the Cabinet's formation was doubt as to whether Alfonso Guerra, Gonzalez's right-hand man, would accept the vice-prime-ministership. According to the press, Guerra resisted joining the government up to the last minute, preferring to continue as PSOE parliamentary floor leader and party vice secretary general. There has been much press speculation that Guerra, frequently labeled a leftist, feared too close an association with a moderate—almost centrist—PSOE administration. We believe, however, that Guerra's reluctance stemmed primarily from a desire to oversee the party now that Gonzalez will devote most of his energy to government matters, and from a showman's natural preference for parliamentary debate over bureaucratic and administrative tussles.

In fact we view much of the negative press Guerra has received as being related to his penchant for the dramatic and his temperamental character, rather than to his political ideology. Among other vocations Guerra has been a theatrical producer—a profession in which his flair for dramatics suited him well. Although certainly to the left of Gonzalez on general economic policy and educational issues, his loyalty to

We believe the potential exists, nevertheless, for friction between Guerra and certain Cabinet members, notably Miguel Boyer; according to press and Embassy reporting, Guerra has undercut Boyer in past party infighting and the two do not get along well personally. We do not think this alone is likely to destroy the government's cohesion, but it could make for some rough going during the first several months when the inexperience of some of the ministers will generate unavoidable tensions.

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Defense and Foreign Affairs

Gonzalez's Foreign Minister, Fernando Moran, is in our view the chief question mark in an otherwise reassuringly moderate cabinet.

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A career diplomat, Moran rose to become Director General of Africa and the Middle East at the Foreign Ministry during the initial years of the post-Franco era before temporarily leaving the service to enter politics. Always a leftist—his political reputation hampered his career under Franco—he became increasingly vocal after 1975, urging a more neutralist, pro-Third World orientation for Spanish foreign policy and arguing strongly against his country's membership in NATO. Moran was briefly associated with the "critico" faction of the PSOE, which opposed Gonzalez's alleged "social democratization" of the party. Although he has recently

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Fernando Moran Lopez



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US Embassy officials consider Fernando Moran, 56, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to be one of the most experienced and influential foreign policy experts in the PSOE. He considers himself to be a Marxist and has opposed NATO membership for Spain. A veteran diplomat, he was a PSOE Senator from 1978 until he was elected a deputy to the Cortes in 1982. Moran graduated from the Diplomatic School in Madrid, where he was until recently chief of historical studies. He has also studied at the London School of Economics and the Institute of International Relations in Paris.

Narcis Serra i Serra



Cortes General ©

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moderated his stances somewhat.

the US Embassy warns that his Third World bias and suspicion of US motives will make him a prickly interlocutor.

Moran's lack of a power base within the PSOE will work to Gonzalez's advantage if he decides to become in effect his own Foreign Minister and let Moran set the tenor, but not the substance, of Spanish foreign policy.

In our view the choice of Narcis Serra for the defense portfolio is one of Gonzalez's better decisions. Serra has been a moderate, popular, and effective Socialist Mayor of Barcelona for the last three years. While he has no substantive background in defense issues, the US Embassy believes he is well regarded by both the Defense Ministry and the Spanish military establishment. His experience in administering Spain's second-largest city will stand him in good stead if the PSOE decides to reform Spain's antiquated military structure. As Defense Minister we believe he would exercise a moderating influence within the government, maintain good relations with the military, and cultivate US contacts. Because he appears to have a

The popular mayor of Barcelona from 1979 until 1982, Narcis Serra i Serra, is a 39-year-old trained economist. During his intense involvement in the politics of the Catalonia, where he also served as regional Minister of Public Works and Territorial Policy (1977-79), he earned a reputation as a capable and innovative administrator who was able to mobilize the bureaucracy towards making effective decisions. A founder of the Catalan Socialist Party, he combined pragmatism with a deliberately cultivated radical image derived from his student days to serve as a bridge between the moderate and leftist wings of the party.

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promising political future in Catalonia and is publicly known to be aiming for the Presidency of the regional government, we believe he would not have agreed to go to Madrid without assurances of full powers at the Ministry and of a decisive role in shaping Spanish defense policy.

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Economic Ministries

We think that another of Gonzalez's wiser selections was his tapping of Miguel Boyer for the gargantuan Economics-Finance-Commerce "super-ministry." Boyer, a long-time PSOE member and close associate of the Prime Minister, is considered by pundits to be a "social democrat to the core." He temporarily abandoned the PSOE in 1977 for an explicitly social democratic grouping, claiming that the party was becoming too radical. His experience in the private sector, his role as consultant to state-owned firms both during and after the Franco period, and his personal ties to leading centrist politicians have earned him the confidence of the financial and business community. Boyer will be responsible for coordinating the work of all the economic ministries and establishing the guidelines of the government's economic program. His

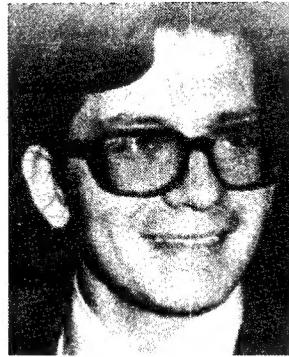
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Miguel Boyer Salvador

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Minister of Finance, Economy, and Commerce Miguel Boyer Salvador, 43, has been a friend of Felipe Gonzalez's since their student days. A leading rightwing socialist, he has dominated the party's economic apparatus for over seven years. During the past decade, he has been a research director and administrator at the National Institute of Industry, head of planning for the government-owned chemical company, a deputy in the Cortes, and a staff member in the Bank of Spain.



Carlos Solchaga Catalan

El Socialista ©

An experienced economist with the Banks of Spain and Vizcaya, Carlos Solchaga Catalan, 38, is Minister of Industry and Energy in the new socialist government. Before assuming his current position, he had served in the national assembly as congressional deputy for Navarra and as spokesman for the Basque socialist parliamentary group since 1980.

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Ministry also controls the Bank of Spain. Boyer's closest ally in the Cabinet will probably be Minister of Industry Carlos Solchaga, a good friend who enjoys similar ties to the financial and industrial establishment.

In our view the authority of the Boyer-Solchaga tandem will be somewhat diluted by the presence in the Cabinet of Labor Minister Joaquin Almunia and Communications and Transportation Minister Enrique Baron. In our view, these two economists have stronger party bases than Boyer and Solchaga, possess closer ties to the socialist UGT labor union, and lack intimate connections with the business world. According to press reports, Almunia, and to a lesser degree Baron, have excellent rapport with Alfonso Guerra. This has led some commentators to speculate that intra-Cabinet strife, pitting the more leftist Guerra-Almunia-Baron trio against the more moderate Gonzalez-Boyer-Solchaga grouping, could hamper formulation and implementation of the government's policies.

We believe, however, that the conflict is more a matter of personal rivalry and political style than a serious disagreement over substantive policy issues. Almunia was in charge of drafting the PSOE's economic electoral platform—a realistic and moderate

Enrique Baron Crespo



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A leading PSOE economic spokesman, Enrique Baron Crespo was a Socialist deputy for Madrid since 1977 before taking over the transport and communications portfolio in the Gonzalez government. US Embassy officials consider him one of his party's most important parliamentarians. Baron, 38, is a Paris-trained lawyer, economist, and business manager.

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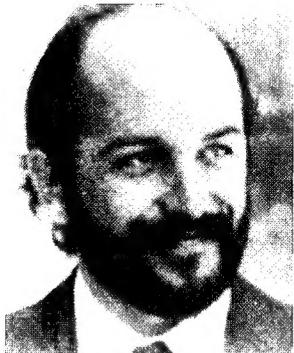
document which rigorously opposed mass nationalizations and quick reflation as a cure for unemployment. Although Almunia and Guerra probably are somewhat to the left of Gonzalez and Boyer, we think that the close friendship between Boyer and the Prime Minister, and Solchaga's newfound prestige within the party—the US Embassy feels that he has eclipsed

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Joaquin Almunia Amann

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Joaquin Almunia Amann, 34, the new Minister of Labor and Social Security, is a former economics expert for the socialist UGT labor union. He has served as PSOE national secretary for labor union policy (1979-81) and for research and planning (1981-82). He is considered to be a moderate socialist, but is not generally associated with the party's social democratic wing. [redacted]



Tomas de la Quadra-Salcedo

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The new Minister of Territorial Administration, 36-year old Tomas de la Quadra-Salcedo, is best known for his work on the Parliamentary Commission's autonomy reports—which recommended curbing the scope and pace of regional devolution—in 1981. A human rights advocate, he was a lawyer in a prominent private firm before he assumed his current position. [redacted]

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Jose Barriomuevo

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An experienced municipal politician, Jose Barriomuevo, 40, has received the interior portfolio in the Gonzalez government. US Embassy officials report that he is a tough, effective administrator and is not regarded as an ideologue. He describes himself as a social democrat. He has served as Second Deputy Mayor of Madrid since 1979. [redacted]

Baron as PSOE parliamentary spokesman for economic affairs—will assure that moderate solutions are adopted, at least during the government's initial phases. Over the longer term, a lively—and possibly divisive—debate on the advisability of more radical curatives could develop if Boyer's mild prescriptions fail. [redacted]

Justice, Interior, and Territorial Administration

Appointments to these sensitive posts—responsible for dealing with the contentious terrorism and regional

autonomy issues—have been made with more regard to professional competence than to party political standing. Justice Minister Fernando Ledesma is a much respected jurist and political independent who in our view will zealously guard his ministry from political manipulation. Interior Minister Jose Barriomuevo, a Madrid municipal official, has managed the capital's police force—experience which should prove useful in coordinating Spain's sometimes fractious security forces. [redacted]

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Territorial Administration, the ministry charged with coordinating Spain's complex experiment in regional devolution, will be headed by Madrid lawyer and PSOE deputy Tomas de la Quadra-Salcedo. Like Ledesma and Barriomuevo, De la Quadra-Salcedo emerged from a Christian Democratic and Catholic syndicalist milieu. He attained prominence in 1981 when he participated in drafting pending legislation that could limit the extent of regional autonomy. We believe that his appointment could signal that the PSOE will take a relatively hard line concerning the need to trim and rationalize the regional autonomy structure—which may strain the

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Ernest Lluch Martin

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Ernest Lluch, Minister of Health and Consumer Affairs, is a respected labor economist and finance expert. Long active in Catalan regional politics, Lluch is nevertheless identified with the Madrid-oriented faction of the PSC-PSOE and has ties to the UGT. A deputy to the Cortes since 1977, he was spokesman for the Catalan socialists in the Cortes during 1980-81. Lluch, 46, studied economics at the Universities of Barcelona and Bologna.



Jose Maria Maravall

La Vanguardia ©

Minister of Education and Science Jose Maria Maravall, 40, believes that gradual social change can be brought about through more equality of opportunity in education. Previously dean of the school of sociology at the University of Madrid, he was educated at Oxford University and spent nine years (1969-78) studying and teaching in England. Although he received a position at the University of Madrid in 1974, he was reluctant to return to Spain until after Franco's death and the return of democracy seemed assured.

party's none-too-satisfactory relations with moderate regionalist forces in the Basque country and Catalonia.

Social and Cultural Ministries

We believe the holders of the health, education, and culture portfolios will play key roles in setting the tone and public image of the new administration, as the functions of their ministries impinge directly on the everyday life of private citizens. It is in these areas that the PSOE may, in our view, have an opportunity to fulfill partially its pledge to work towards a more egalitarian and just society without either massive increases in public expenditures or fundamental restructuring of Spain's economic system.

Health and Consumer Affairs Minister Ernest Lluch has a reputation as a competent labor economist and financial expert. He enjoys close ties to the socialist UGT labor federation and the PSOE's national leadership, although his standing within the Catalan regional branch of the party—where he led an unsuccessful opposition to more leftist and regionalist policies favored by regional leaders—has suffered recently. US officials feel that Lluch will work hard to improve the quality and availability of health care through practical reforms and with due respect for fiscal constraints.

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Javier Solana Madariaga

La Calle ©

Minister of Culture Francisco Javier Solana Madariaga, 40, is a moderate socialist who has belonged to the party's executive committee since 1976. A physicist who earned a Ph.D. in the United States during 1964-71, he has taught at the University of Madrid since the early 1970s. He is well liked within the party and is a close associate of Felipe Gonzalez.

Gonzalez's selections for the culture and education slots are particularly important, since confrontation with the Church over educational reform and abortion would quickly raise the level of political tension. Education Minister and party theorist Jose Maria Maravall is a self-proclaimed gradualist who has been

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accused by at least one PSOE radical of "de-Marxifying" the party. Nevertheless, he has publicly promised to revise the law governing relations between the public and private—mostly Church-sponsored—educational systems in order to remove alleged handicaps from the state sector. This task will require tact and patience—qualities for which Maravall is not especially well known—if it is not to unite the Church and the rightist parties against the socialist regime. Maravall's colleague at the Ministry of Culture—Javier Solana—faces a less formidable task. He is a US-trained physicist and pragmatic politician who is personally close to Gonzalez. The press has singled him out as a man enjoying good relations with all the PSOE's sectors—and thus as a possible successor to Gonzalez if the Prime Minister were killed or incapacitated.

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